

admits that the public is acquainted with his eccentricities! These things not only render reply unnecessary, but make it a matter of doubt whether Mr. C. is to be considered as a fully responsible being.

Mr. McGinn had long given notice of his intention to deliver a course of Lectures against Temperance Societies. At last, towards the close of the winter, he announced a series of letters in the *Montreal Transcript*, instead of his lectures. He was immediately opposed by Mr. Driscoll, *Advocate*, but Mr. M'G. refused to dispute with him till he had finished the series. After a few letters Mr. Driscoll discontinued his opposition, for what reason we know not; but if he does not resume it, when his opponent will consent to "stand," we see not how he can extricate himself from the charge, either of designing to betray the cause of Temperance, or of being more versatile in his purposes than he ought to be. Another opponent has, in the meantime, come forth against Mr. McGinn, signing himself W. Portch, Carpenter.

As Mr. M'G. is, therefore, in other hands already, it might be considered unfair to step betwixt him and his opponents. We shall not, therefore, enter into a formal examination of all that he has advanced, but confine ourselves to a few remarks.

The object of Mr. McGinn is to prove that the use of intoxicating drink is a *religious duty*. "I have already shown," he says in his ninth letter, "that *positive duty* must give way to this *new expediency*," meaning thereby that the law of expediency, on which the cause of Temperance rests, sets aside "positive duty." To prove this he quotes Deut. xiv. 26., and refers to the marriage in Cana! Every person who reads his Bible is aware that there is a class of passages which speak of wine and strong drink with *approbation*, and a second with *disapprobation*. Now he who would find out the real sense of the Bible on this question must not confine his attention to one of the classes only, but must *compare them both*, and find out a mode of interpretation which will reconcile them. Mr. McGinn has not done so, and we are, therefore, entitled to conclude, even without examination, that his explanation cannot be right, or right only by chance. Let us illustrate this by the following comparison, which, though objectionable in one respect, is perfectly fair, as far as concerns the purpose for which we employ it. If a merchant were to make out a statement of his affairs, for the purpose of knowing his profit or loss, and were to omit entirely one side of his accounts, and bring forward only that which was in his favour, we would know, without

examination, that the conclusion at which he arrived could not be correct. But Mr. M'G. has acted in a somewhat similar manner, in inquiring whether the Bible favours Temperance Societies or not. Of this he seems himself to be aware, for, *after having proved*, as he asserts again and again, that the principles of the Temperance Reform are contrary to the word of God, he begins to examine those texts of Scripture by which they have been defended, that is, to inquire whether the Bible does not favour them after all.

It is not our design therefore to take notice of any of his letters (with one exception) until he comes to reply to those passages of scripture, which have been urged in defence of our principles. The foregoing illustration will show, that Mr. M'G. ought to have examined these passages *before he formed his conclusion*. Instead of doing this, he has committed the very childish error of first deciding, and then examining the matter. These letters contain many things that are in themselves perfectly unexceptionable, but, as they have no connection with the question in dispute, we are at a loss to know for what purpose they have been introduced, except it be to lead the minds of his readers away from the subject. They contain also much positive and dogmatical assertion, much violent, abusive declamation, gross misrepresentation, of which we shall immediately notice an instance; and, what is weakest, and perhaps worst of all, the point to be proved is constantly *taken for granted*. For example, he brings an argument against us from the *perfection of the divine law*; but in this he is most palpably guilty of begging the question, for he ought first to have proved that the divine law is against us. This, however, he has not done, even by his own acknowledgment, for he uses this argument before he has even looked at the passages of Scripture which forbid the use of wine, or approve of abstinence from it. The perfection of the divine law is a point which we hold, both theoretically and practically, as firmly as himself; but it devolves upon him to show how that law can be perfect which made abstinence from wine such an excellent and commendable practice in former times, (see Prov. 20. 1; Prov. 23. 29—35; Jer. 35. 14. 18; Rom. 14. 2.) and, as he tells us, makes it a most wicked and unscriptural practice now. Had Mr. M'G. attacked the following positions—that the intemperance which at present abounds, and is acknowledged by all, arises out of the drinking usages, so fashionable and prevalent in society—that, until these usages are given up, it is vain to expect any diminution of their effects, and that to oppose them by public association is the most effectual way of putting them down—he would have acted at least